



League of Women Voters Kaua'i County

PO Box 1181, Lihue, HI 967

Memo 2/25/06

TO: Kauai County Charter Commissioners

FROM: Carol Bain, president, League of Women Voters

RE: Words of Encouragement to Put Ballot Choices before the Voters

As you recall, I have provided research on topics of consideration for this Charter Review process, specifically the topic of districting. I provided this research in order to demonstrate that pros and cons of an issue could be presented in a clear and unbiased manner. Some commissioners have researched items of their own, I am sure. You have all had dialog and heard some excellent points of view expressed on areas where the charter is in need of change.

All this is being done with the understanding that the charter of this county is definitely in need of change. The system of checks and balances is not working, as evidenced by the many suits and lack of appointed commissioners to fill commissions currently defined in the charter.

You are not merely going through the protocol of a ten-year review process. You have an opportunity to present important choices to the public on the ballot next November.

At the Jan. 23 public meeting of the charter commission, I heard a hesitation from this commission that perhaps the citizens should not be presented with hard decisions or choices that perhaps are "uncomfortable" for certain commissioners. I believe citizens deserve to be presented with hard decisions about their own governance. If that means you must do the research, then you must get to it as time running out.

Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people. Your task is to present the information to the people in an unbiased manner and give them with the choices. Do not make the decision for the people by refusing to put choices on the ballot.

Placing your trust in the people may not be the easy thing to do. It may be politically difficult to put important recommendations before the citizens for vote.

My message: Have faith in the people's common sense. I look forward to seeing important options, with the pros and cons presented in impartial and unbiased manner to the citizens on the November 2006 General Election ballot.